The NATVRAL MAN: LLOYD

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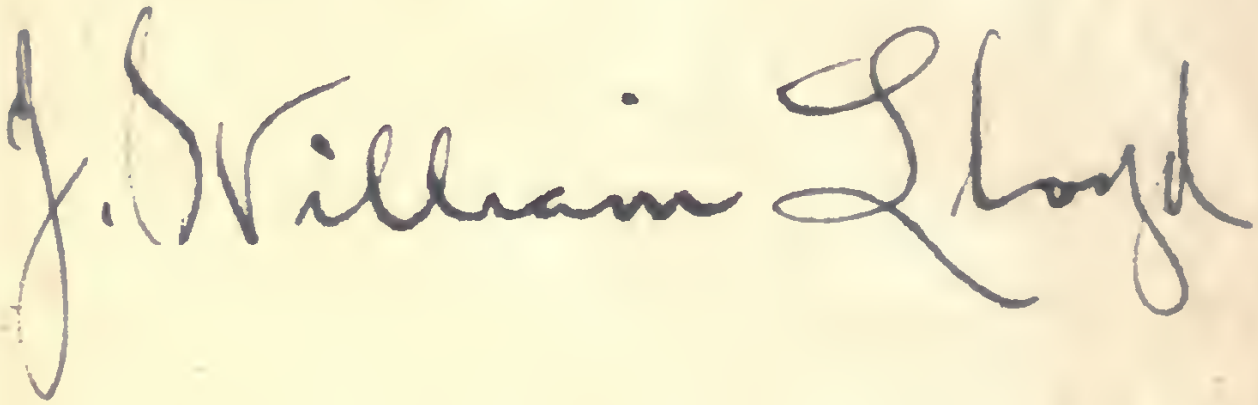
THE NATURAL MAN.

Freedom is this to me -
The remedy.



The NATURAL MAN

a romance of the GOLDEN AGE

J. WILLIAM LLOYD

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The friendly and flowing savage, who is he?
Is he waiting for civilization, or is he past it,
and mastering it?

Whitman.

'If you would live at your ease,' says Democritus, 'manage but a few things.' * * * For the greater part of what we say and do, being unnecessary, if this were but once retrenched we should have both more leisure & less disturbance.

Marcus Aurelius.

It is not meant, O Reader, that you should live life as this man lived it, but only that you should fearlessly and gladly live your own life.

CHAPTER I

IT was June; hazy, hot, voluptuous, with just a hint in the clouds piling like pillows of down behind the Western bourne that upon them Thunder and Storm were sleeping.

Just here the trees opened a little on the lower side of the terrace and she could see far down the mountain slope and off over the cities and fields of the plain. Lazy with the heat her horse stopped; or perhaps horses also like beautiful views. Be it as you please, here they paused and gazed downward. Then occurred that which to

her seemed as a vision, a phantasy.

There was a clatter of hoofs below, beating the still air vividly, and along the open space of red road down there, perhaps one hundred yards away, flew a naked horse, that is saddleless, bridleless, and on his back a naked man, or nearly so, waving a green branch. Hardly had he disappeared behind the thick shade of overarching trees before she doubted her eyes, so like a relief on an ancient tomb had seemed the muscular figure clinging with sinewy legs to the glossy steed, vine-crowned and branch-laden, cumbered with no garments.

"There are no demi-gods in these days," she said.

But just then came a shrill neigh from the right hand distance, and a nickering whinney from the left, and out into the open on the same track came a young colt,

all legs, tail, & outstretched neck, bolting with all the wasteful speed of his youth after his retreating dam.

"There must be something real about it, Jack," she said, stroking the mane of her steed, who was much interested, ears a-prick, "One may imagine Greek heroes, but horse-babies are too ridiculous to be anything but facts."

Jack did not resent this insult to his race, but turning one eye and ear back at the sound of her voice deliberately took up the ascent once more.

Many women would have feared, and with dread visions of escaped lunatics would have returned home headlong, but this young woman, haughty and reserved as her acquaintances deemed her, was withal dauntless and daring, and had no tremors.

But perhaps two hours later she decided that she had lost her way. Not that there was aught alarming in that, either, for it was not yet noon & she had only to take any downward track to get to the low land where some main road could be found. Accordingly she took the first down trail, a mere woodcutter's track, and after awhile came to a better road, and then to a crossing. Here Jack shied, and she started, for there, on a bank, half in the sun, asleep, lay her demi-god again. He was not nude completely, for close-fitting breeches of corduroy reached to his knees, but elsewise he wore nothing but a wreath of wild grape leaves on his broad brow, plumed with one barred owl-feather. Brown as a nut with sun-tan, his carven muscles stood out sculpturesquely as he lay on his back, one knee drawn up, one hand under his head,

the other thrust into a great pouch at his girdle. His hair was heavy, as always with those who eschew hats, and a little curly, his face bearded, strong and not unhandsome, his flesh clean.

Undoubtedly he was crazy, but he was picturesque, and she was an artist and not afraid; besides he was not mounted now, and Jack was fleet. She looked & admired, and even penciled a little sketch on her note book. But before more than the face was done Jack grew suspicious, snorted, and stamped on the stony road-bed, and the demi-god woke, stared at her in a little confusion, reddened, and sat up. Perhaps even a Greek would have blushed to awake in a wood and see a haughty young woman, elegantly attired, regarding him with just a trace of amusement gleaming under her level brows and slipping away a note

book and pencil.

"Excuse me, but will you tell me which road to take to go to Rippleford?"

He stood up with a light bound, and his voice was gentle and refined.

"Certainly! I will with pleasure. But neither of these. You must go with me down this one a little way, and then I will put you on the Rippleford road."

Putting his fingers to his lips he blew a piercing whistle, and out of the woods, from somewhere, came cantering the black mare she had seen and the gawky colt. Braided into the mane and flowing tail of the mother-horse were several feathers, Indian-wise. Trotting by her side with one hand on her mane the demi-god leapt on her back, and guiding her by a motion of his hand, rode alongside of his questioner.

"Now if you will come with me, please,

I will show you the road."

"Mercy" thinks this daring young woman, "I am in his power now, I must humor him, anyway. He has a splendid torso, too, and what a calf and instep. I would like to model them."

But she said nothing, and the silence was a little constrained.

He rode just ahead, & the colt ran in front and teased the mare, made her prance and curvet, but the little thing was afraid of Jack.

After going a little way they came in sight of a small valley with the mountain very steep on the North-West, a beautiful park-like vale with much green grass growing in fine turf, and beautiful clumps of noble trees, a brook in the centre, and cows and goats grazing. And on the side near her was a stout fence made of stumps

and pleached trees.

"What a lovely place," she said, "who owns it?"

"I do."

"Poor, naked man, he is very crazy," she thought.

"Indeed! you are very fortunate."

He gave her a smile, a quick gleam of white teeth under a long mustache.

"Yes, I am the happiest of men."

A pleasant form for insanity to take, if one must have it. She must humor it.

"And these cattle, they are yours?"

"All mine."

A little more silence, & then they came to where a road seemed to come out of this vale and off to the eastward.

"This is the road to Rippleford."

"Oh thank you! I am greatly obliged."

"No, on the contrary I owe you

thanks for the pleasure you have given me."

He looked very sane, with a pleasant, clear light in his eyes, and she smiled a little.

"Then even the happiest of men can recieve an additional pleasure?"

"Why, certainly, who more so! — to him that hath shall be given!"

"But I spoiled your nap."

He reddened again and murmured like a shy schoolboy, apologetically:

"It was so beautiful there, and so delightful to lie on one's back and look up into the sky, and hear the bees murmur in the tree tops."

"It was indeed, I quite envied you, for I used to do just that when a child."

Instantly his shyness vanished in the enthusiasm of one who utters a favorite

thought.

"And why do you not do it now? You would enjoy it just as much now as you did then. Nay more, for the adult mind can interweave more charms, can be more consciously happy, can receive more wide delights than the child mind. Why do you, why does every one, pine for the joys of childhood and yet refuse the *means* that childhood instinctively takes to attain its pleasures?"

He was warm with enthusiasm, his eyes flashing, his sensitive features glowingly expressive, but he did not look in the least maniacal, & his voice was gentle almost to music, and yet low as if used mainly in the utterance of murmured soliloquies.

But she thought of herself, the flattered and stately Miss Earle, asleep on her back

in the sun, gazed at possibly by a naked demi-god on a black mare, and she replied very coldly.

"No, I thank you. I do not think the attitude would become me."

A smile came into his eyes, twitched the corners of his mustache & ran all over his face. He was actually laughing at her.

She opened her eyes a little with a haughty flash of indignation.

"Good morning, sir, I must be going now!"

He leapt from his horse, and running to the roadside plucked from the grass a bunch of wild strawberries and, running beside her horse as she moved off, held them up.

"I was rude," he said, "please forgive me and take these."

His face was so contrite, & his action

so spontaneous (besides, she remembered that she must humor him) that she said,

"Oh, it is of no consequence. Thank you, these are delicious."

"You are very generous," he murmured, "good morning. This road will take you direct to Rippleford. If ever you come this way again, come and see my home."

And leaping on his mare, who had trotted behind him like a dog, he turned, and galloped toward his valley. In spite of herself she could not help turning Jack and looking after him. The black mare flew toward the fence and cleared it like a bird, while after came the nickering colt. He could not jump the fence, too, but as the outside was less steep than the inside, he found a place where he could clamber up to the top of the wall, and from here, leaping down, he was soon tearing after his

dam. And the last that Theodora Earle saw of them, all three rode with a splash into the brook, where the mare commenced to drink, and the man, the owlplume nodding on his head, sat on her side, plashing his bare feet in the cool stream.

CHAPTER II

IT was the office of the Rippleford Record.

Such places are all unbeautiful and they are all alike.

But the editor washed his inky fingers and set out his two chairs, for he had lady visitors– his cousin Edith, with the flaxen hair, and her dark friend, Theodora Earle.

"Oh, indeed, Cousin Sax is very ambitious," Edith was saying, "he aspires to have the best country paper in the State. Paid contributors, you know, & that sort of thing."

Saxon Ward laughed. "Yes, Cousin

Edith writes me stories sometimes."

"O *my* stories are nothing. But you really have one great contributor."

"Forrest Westwood, you mean. Yes, he is a genius in his way. I must show you the little poem he brought me in yesterday. Said he had just composed it. Came tearing up here on a gallop, as usual, & away again in a cloud of dust. What a happy, healthy vision he is, a living picture. And Blackbird looks just as happy, as she carries him, and almost as intelligent."

"Oh Cousin Sax, let me see the poem, please, right away!"

"Well, its right there in the desk, on top, under the paper weight. You must see this man before you leave, Miss Earle. As an artist, you would appreciate him. I would wager considerable that he is the most picturesque man in America. Thoreau

was nothing beside him."

"Indeed! tell me about him."

"Well, he was born not far from here, on a common country farm. Nothing remarkable about the Westwoods, generally. Just farmers, but perhaps a little more given to wood craft than most of their sort. His father died from a carriage accident [which also injured his mother] when he was a mere boy. He grew up after his own devices, and was always peculiar. Always wandering in the woods, or reading, or saying strange, startling, beautiful things. He took a long trip when a lad, with an uncle, up in the Adirondacks and Canada, and again out West. Another time he went off and spent a year among the Indians. But his mother became an invalid, as a result of her injury, & he came back and stayed with her till she died. She idolized

him, and gave him his way in everything, and as a boy he laid his plans to be what he is now. He obtained the gift from her of a tract of wild forest land on the mountains, & made a bargain with a wood-cutter by which the majority of the trees were to be cleaned away, stumps and all, the stumps to be piled on the borders as a fence, in return for the valuable timber cut down. The wood-cutter had the best of it, financially, but Westwood was level-headed, too, in his way. He had gone over the ground & marked all the trees he wanted saved, and a landscape gardener could not have done it with more judgment. He sowed all the clear ground between the clumps of trees with grass, and from time to time set out fruit & nut trees and grape vines and flowering shrubs; and by the time he became a man and was ready to

occupy it he had a perfect American Eden there, a lovely park, which was part meadow, part pasture and part orchard. After his mother died he sold the home farm, moved to this park in the forest, and gave himself up entirely to the realization of his eccentric fancies. His pet doctrine is that in becoming civilized human beings have forgotten the art of happiness, which, he maintains, can only be found in living like a child and close to nature. To be a sort of gentle savage, or refined barbarian, or, as he would call it, "a natural man," is his ideal. He rather despises property, & gave away most of his to a widowed aunt who was left poor with a very large family. He lives mainly on his own game, milk, eggs, fruits and honey, and by selling his surplus of these, carving nick-nacks to sell to summer visitors, & writing for my paper

he has a small income. But his habits are so simple he has more than he wants, and considers himself rather a rich man. His one dissipation is the purchase of books."

"All this is very interesting, but does not prove him so very unique."

"No, but he *is* unique, nevertheless. Imagine a man, in conversation näive as a child, sometimes shy and sensitive, sometimes bold, eloquent and enthusiastic, but always saying the most startling things in the most sincere and persuasive way; a poet; a sculptor, or at least a carver; a musician who wanders thro' the deep woods at midnight and flutes divinely to the moon; who reads Greek and Latin; who wears no more clothing than the weather, and Society's prejudices force him to; who sleeps out doors in summer and often in winter; who hunts with the bow

and arrow; who rides bareback; carries great weights on his head; lives in a half-cave and in the midst of a happy family of dogs, goats, cows, horses, squirrels, snakes, birds and bees; is as frankly pagan as a Greek, and a gentle contemnor of all conventionalities and sacred institutions."

"Now, Theodora, listen to this!"

TRIOLET.

To lie on one's back and look at the sky
Up thro' the branches & leaves of geeen!
Why, I used to do that when only so high—
Lie on my back and look up at the sky,
At the white and the blue, and wish I could fly:
It gives one a feeling so great and serene
To lie on one's back and gaze at the sky,
Up thro' the branches & leaves of green.

"There, isn't that just lovely!"

"It is quite pretty."

"Quite pretty! I say it is perfectly beautiful!"

"You must praise generously, Miss Earle, for Cousin Edith has quite lost her romantic heart to my picturesque friend."

"Did you say he composed that yesterday?"

"So he said. But what makes you look so peculiarly?"

"Oh, nothing, only I feel that I could, you have told me so much, you know, sketch your hero, lying on his back on the bracken. Let me try."

(Pulls out her note book and begins to make marks rapidly, concealing the page from the others.)

"There, isn't that like him? Am I not a seer?"

"Splendid! Miss Earle, why, it is a portrait!"

"Why, Theodora! how *could* you do it!"

Just then came the clatter of hoofs without, an anxious neigh, and a nickering whinney.

"Speak of the devil"— said Saxon Ward, "come here, girls!"

Adown the village street toward them, reeling rhythmically in an ambling pace, came Blackbird, with Westwood on her back, and the ubiquitous, leggy colt. Evidently both mare and master had on their society attire, for she had a panther skin surcingled on with a broad horsehair cinch, in lieu of saddle; and he wore Indian leggins and moccasins, and a sort of vest, or rather shirt, sleeveless, with large armholes and cut low & square in the neck, made from

numberless mole skins, so neatly sewn together that the outside was as unbroken as velvet & softer than any woven nap could have been. On his head were now no vine-leaves, but the owlplume twirled in the braided lock, and on his back hung a bow and quiver of arrows. Behind the procession, at an easy jog-trot, side by side like a well-matched team, lolling red tongues and hanging long velvety ears, came two little beagle hounds.

It was a pretty pageant, seen in the long rays of the declining sun.

In his right hand Westwood carried something. Seeing the heads of Ward and Edith out of the window he sprang up, standing, on the back of Blackbird, starting her into a canter, & came up swinging a great hawk, transfixed with an arrow, around his head with a very boyish air

and shout of triumph. But catching sight of Miss Earle's face beyond he dropped back to a sitting posture in some confusion, and with such precipitation that he nearly lost his seat altogether.

"There, Theo," scolded Edith, "I wanted him to show off, & he commenced beautifully, and you frightened him so that he nearly tumbled down."

"Well, that would have been showing *off* wouldn't it?"

"Be still! you always were a *fright* anyway. Mr. Westwood I want to make you acquainted with my very dear friend, Miss Theodora Earle of Boston."

Westwood bowed to this head-long introduction, and then, leaping off Blackbird, came striding in with the two little hounds at his heel.

"I think Miss Earle and I have met

before."

"Oh the horrid, deceitful thing!—Why Mr. Westwood, here she has been letting Cousin Sax and me tell her all about you for the last hour, as if she had never heard of you, and now it appears you were acquainted."

"Talking about me!" — began Westwood, embarrassed again.

But Miss Earle came to his assistance.

"Indeed I never heard of this gentleman before. But I *met* him day before yesterday, while riding on the mountain, and he directed me to Rippleford. He was very kind. So you see there was no deception, except a little bit of mystification about the picture which I would have cleared up before long. You see I first saw Mr. Westwood —"

"Asleep in the sun, I'll wager! That's

how you got his picture! Forrest, that's a good one on you! Fairly caught that time."

"Yes, he was asleep, and I had just time to sketch his face when he woke. It was very rude, Mr. Westwood, forgive me."

"I will forgive you, if you will accept my invitation and come to Vale Sunrise and see my home."

"'Vale Sunrise,' a pretty name! — is that the name of your home?

"No, Vale Sunrise is the name of my farm. Cave-Gables is the name of my home."

"The names are a temptation in themselves. I will surely come, some day, if Mr. Ward or Edith will go with me."

"It is a great honor, Miss Earle," said Saxon Ward, "invitations to visit Cave Gables are not common, I assure

you."¶"I believe that, & I am very grateful, Mr. Westwood."

"But see here, Theo, I have a crow to pick with *you*. To think of your having those adventures with Mr. Westwood on the mountain, two days ago, and not a word to me— two days! just think of it. Ah, you are a faithless friend."

"Miss Earle is not such a chatter box as you, Cousin Edith."

"Oh Cousin Sax! — how mean of you. I'm not a chatter box, am I, Mr. Westwood?"

"No indeed, Miss Lyle. It is certainly not *boxed*."

"Mr. Westwood! — and I appealed to you! Very well, I will punish you sir, and vindicate myself, by not speaking to you for a whole week — sometime."

"What beautiful dogs you have, Mr.

Westwood. I am very fond of dogs. Come here doggies, I want to pat you!"

The little beagles, lying side by side between Westwood's feet, picked up their ears at this, and wagged their tails a bit by way of canine courtesy, but did not otherwise move, except to look from Miss Earle to their master.

"It's all right, babies, she is a friend. Go to her."

Then up got the little houndkins and side by side, as usual, went to Miss Earle, and received the caresses of the two young ladies with evident delight. But at a "Hist!" and beckoned finger from their master, they instantly returned, and laid down by his side as before.

"They would take a prize at any show, Mr. Westwood."

"Yes, the rearing and training of bea-

gles has been a passion in my family for at least a century, and we have a strain of our own. The Westwood beagles are well known; for beauty, intelligence, docility and tenacity of scent there are none better, and I can sell my pups for a fancy price. I have two puppies now at home, unsold. Bell, here, is the mother, and the father a pedigreed prize winner."

"Indeed, then please consider them sold to me & train them for me as you see fit. I want them for my little brother in Boston. What are these dogs named?"

"Bayer and Bellt. Bay & Bell for short."

"Mr. Westwood is a sort of a baron, Theo, and his dogs are his henchmen and retainers. He has two to guard his castle, two to herd his flocks and two to hunt with — and usually some puppies for squires."

"Where did you get the hawk, Forrest, and what are you going to do with him!"

"Yesterday he killed a hen of mine. And the day before one. And I swore vengeance & lay in wait for him. But his eyes were anointed with the oil of prudence and he saw me. And today I took Theocritus and went up to the Swallow's Nest to comfort my soul with bucolic poetry. There hiding, my enemy unsuspectingly came, and wheeled in slow rings just below me, always looking down at the hens; and when the moment came I rained one of my gentle shafts upon him so that he fell, spirally down-whirling, into the very midst of those he would have slain, and – I just picked him up & brought him here. I didn't know then what it was for, but I know now that the gods made me carry it

so as to have something wherewith to appease the just wrath of Miss Lyle and persuade her to speak to me as of yore, without the direful silence of one whole week spoken of by Edith the prophet."

"O thank you, Mr. Westwood, how good you are! I will have it stuffed and mounted. But you know I could never have kept that threat, for I *am* a chatter box, and that's the truth."

"Well, I must go now. My kine 'with trailing feet & shambling gait' will be coming in & lowing to be milked. Goodnight, Miss Earle. And you, my good friends, come with her, as soon as you can, and spend the day with me. Good night all. Here babies,— heel! — march!"

And in another moment Blackbird was skimming toward the setting sun, bearing on her back this strange man, along the

dusty village street, the owl-plume fluttering above, and the little hounds, shoulder to shoulder, running hard behind.

"He has to dress more when he comes to the village," Saxon said, "for the village fathers were moved to righteous indignation, once, and arrested him for indecent nakedness."

"What do you think of him, Theo?"

"His strangeness is all that you described it, certainly. But I don't know whether I like him or not, yet. When I first saw him I thought he was crazy.

"Everybody does, I guess."

CHAPTER III

JUST as Vale Sunrise became aware of its name that summer morning, came into it from the eastward three riders, long shadows going far before, their horses hoofs brushing dew from the herbage.

They were on the trail leading from the gate to Cave Gables.

"Ah, there it is!" said Saxon Ward, as a turn in the trail revealed a tall Gothic gable on a terrace at the foot of the mountain. Between where they stood and the terrace was an *intervale*, as the pleasant old word is, of alluvial land and in this a

narrow winding lake, made, evidently, by damming the brook which flowed from the terrace, and a little unfenced garden about which patroled two black and white collies evidently to keep off the cows, goats and other creatures which might destroy its succulent products.

"How like Arcadia!" said Miss Earle, as she dwelt on the beauties of the scene — the sparkling dew, the long, cool shadows, the morning light on the dimpling lake, the browsing goats and kine.

"It *is* Arcadia," said Edith, ardently. "See, there goes Forrest now!"

Up the path on the terrace they saw him mounting, balancing a vessel of milk on his head, his two little hounds behind. Just then the collies gave warning, a thunderous reply came from mightier canine throats at the dwelling, & the beagles and

puppies added their shriller notes to the din. Forrest set down his milk, said something to the dogs, and then, with a whoop, came bounding down the terrace & along the trail toward them with great leaps like a boy. It was noticeable, the discipline of his dogs. The collies barked but did not leave their charge, the beagles barked but did not offer to quit the milk they had been told to guard. The guardian mastiffs did not appear in sight.

In a moment Forrest, flushed, laughing, the morning light shining on his bare, brown sides, was with them, holding out the hand of welcome.

"So good of you to come, and at this time. The morning hours are so beautiful. They are *my* hours. I am "at home," as the fashionable people say, at sunrise."

"I knew that," said Edith, "and so

these lazy folk were routed up unmercifully this morning,& forced to come,willy-nilly."

As they rode on, he trotted by their side with bare feet in the dew. He had not even a chaplet or an owl-plume on this time, nothing but the corduroy trunk and pouch, but the lithe muscles worked beautifully. As he ran he plucked flowers and handed them up to the ladies.

"I have just finished milking" he said, as they crossed a little rustic bridge at the head of the pond. "The cattle come up here in the morning about the water and then I milk what I wish. Some one or other comes from the Red Farm & milks the rest. They are gone now, for I stopped after milking to catch a couple of fish."

"The Red Farm is half a mile away," explained Saxon, "and the people, there, buy Forrest's milk, and bring him butter,

bread and whatever of that sort he needs."

"Commerce even in Vale Sunrise," laughed Forrest, as he picked up his milk pail & balanced it on his head with Hindoo dexterity, while the little dogs wagged tails of welcome to the visitors. "You see I need quite a good deal of milk, myself, and my dogs and chickens take more."

"And do you do all this work before breakfast?"

"Not exactly. I get a pint of warm goat's milk from the first udder I come to in the morning, and after that breakfast is a leisurely matter, perhaps, in the fruit season, plucked from the vines & bushes."

They were now on the terrace, and the place, to Miss Earle at least, was full of interest. Cave Gables seemed rightly named, for three gables, one east, one west, one south, lifted above three cave like

openings in a pile of rocks over which vines and bushes grew in wild confusion. In front a grove of stately tall trees on the level terrace, between the trunks of which the entire Vale could be seen in all its park-like loveliness, the brook as a silver thread, the lake flashing in the sun, the forest-covered hills surrounding. East of the dwelling the brook came roaring down the steep, across the terrace, and again in a series of cataract leaps down the terrace to the intervale. On the further side they saw poultry under the trees, evidently dwelling in other caverns there, and stands of bees, in primitive "gums," under a projecting ledge of rock. On the hither side, near the eastern gable, the waters of the brook were joined by those of a spring coming out of the mountain. On each side of the open south door of Cave Gables lay two im-

mense mastiffs, tawny as lionesses, thundering mightily at them till their master spoke, then coming civilly enough, but with dignity, to welcome and be petted.

He turned their horses loose to roam at will, and then led them west, a rod or two, close to the mountain steep, where the view was specially fine and a large flat rock lay level on four others under a mighty shagbark.

"This is my summer table, for perhaps you know that in the season of the sun I live without doors."

He ran and brought a bundle of furs to make them seats, and then, excusing himself, went off with his milk. They saw him pour some of it into a carven trough, whereat all the dogs and a huge black cat came and drank their fill, & then wade the brook and give to the hens, and place the

remainder in a cool crock in the spring. Always, they noticed, he waded the brook instead of using the stepping stones or leaping across. While he was gone they discovered his summer bedroom — a bed of warm dry sand close under the mountain side; a projecting rock, high, overfringed with vines, keeping off the rain. A pillow of balsam fir, a red blanket, a bow and quiver – that was the furniture.

Carved on the soft sandstone was this poem —

SULTRY SUNRISING.

Praise me the summer mornings, beautiful,
Sultry, and fullest of passionate life:
The hot sun, like a young lover, waking,
Leaping down on the fair earth, amorous;
The dew on the grass bright like a bride's eyes;
The flies buzzing dreamily, dreamily.

A cool deliciousness tinct with fire;
Pricked by desire an indolent softness;
Bliss of the naked flesh; kisses that sting
Of sun and air on the skin.

O praise me
The summer mornings, sultry and beautiful,
Great with Greek spirit, animal, innocent.

He came up, now, and began to make a fire in a fire place of stones, semi-circular, opposite this "bed-room."

"We found your nest while you were gone," Edith called, gayly.

"Yes? But did you notice that there were other nests, above mine, along the under edge of the rock?"

They had not noticed that.

"They are friends of mine, those eave-swallows, & we do not disturb each other.

They make pleasant little noises in the evenings, while I lie there and look out at the stars, or when I get up to replenish the fire on cool nights."

"Do the collies guard your garden day and night?"

"No, at night the beagles take their place, and then the collies come and sleep with me or by the fire."

"Do you always sleep here?"

"O no. If the whim seizes me I take my blanket & wander where I will, sleeping wherever I stop. On moonlight nights I wander till morning, sometimes, & sleep in the daytime to make up."

While talking he drew from his pouch a bundle of damp moss and opening this they saw two fine black bass, still breathing. He went to the brook, killed and cleaned them, and then spitted them on

sharp white sticks inclined to the fire, turning them at intervals.

Now he set the table. He spread a "table cloth" over the rock and it was a wonder to them. Made of white, soft buck-skin, fringed with knife cuts, and decorated Indian-wise, with pictures of fruit, game, campfires and sylvan feasts.

They were interested & amused to see him fish his table utensils out of the waters of the brook, and at their nature too. All were home-made, except the knives. Forks of hand carved bone and horn. Bowls and trenchers and spoons of bass-wood, beech-wood, tulipwood and maple; carved, all of them, in dainty and artistic fashion. Cups of horn, gourd, & cocoa-shell, carved also; the gourds having evidently been cut while growing so that the marks and pattern *grew* into them. And there were even

individual butter dishes, made from mussel-shells not carved, but highly polished, displaying the nacre. The two that he set before the ladies had real pearls attached, encrusted in their mother. Not a single thing of glass, or china, or crockery of any sort.

"Is the brook your pantry?"

"It is at least my cupboard. You see I do not like to wash dishes, so after every meal I put all into the brook, there to wash till called for, and I have plenty so any refractory dish may have enough. And the little minnows and craw-fishes and cutting sands and whipping waters make all clean for me, at last."

It was so droll that they all laughed merrily, and fell to admiring the dishes.

Everything was in harmony. There were fresh butter from the Red Farm on

great cool cabbage leaves, strawberries on vine leaves, bread on a tray of birch bark, cream in a calabash, honey-comb in a hollow stone, a bouquet of wild dog-roses and ferns wrapped in moss and set in a turtle shell.

Suddenly he stopped in comical dismay.

"How stupid I am! I never asked if you breakfasted before you came?"

Saxon laughed, and Edith said mischievously:

"Yes."

"For shame! Edith," said Theodora, "No, Mr. Westwood. We knew you would want to feast us and we took only a cup of coffee before starting."

"There it is again!" he cried, "coffee! — and I never thought of it. You see, I never drink any of these things, & forget others do. But perhaps I have something

you will like." ¶ And bounding into his dwelling [for he seldom seemed to walk anywhere, but ran or leaped like a roe-buck] he brought out several long-necked bottles in his arms.

"Sorry. In this case I had to use glass. I have to compromise sometimes with civilization, & there really seems nothing in nature to take the place of a bottle where air must be excluded. Here is unfermented wine— this from the wild grape, this from wild raspberries, this from wild blackberries, take your choice. Every summer I gather great quantities of wild fruit and take it to the Red Farm and they can it for me on shares, or make wine. Only theirs they ferment."

It was a strange wild feast, which those visitors never forgot. Sitting on furs around a rock, eating those simple, delici-

cious viands and drinking pure fruit juice, while the birds sang over and around and the sun peeped in through the branches, and the vale was beautiful before them.

And strangest of all was that bare-skinned, sun-tanned man, with the knotted muscles, soft voice & happy dreaming face.

The eave swallows flew twittering about their homes, a cat-bird was musically busy in the thicket, a thrush sat fearlessly on her nest anear, while her mate on the dry branch, not twenty yards away, made the air pulse with delicious music; and a grey squirrel ran up to Forrest's hand for crumbs, passing saucily under the beagles' noses, who hardly deigned to notice. And, finally, two little kids came and danced on the rock at the terrace edge.

It was the Golden Age.

"Mr. Westwood" said Edith suddenly,

"you are a professional Natural Man — what are the most natural foods?"

He laughed, as he usually did when he spoke, as one might at a favorite child.

"I fancy, as we are monkey-cousins, that fruits and nuts, after original milk, are the most natural. Eggs are like milk and resemble nuts. After eggs insects & shell-fish; then fish; then flesh. I forgot herbs, and roots but they are less natural, I fancy, anyway."

"Insects! — bugs! Oh my! Are we to eat them?"

"Monkeys are fond of many insects. I suppose that our prejudices cut us off from much palatable food in that line, for no good reason. Certain grubs are considered a delicacy in some parts of the world, and grasshoppers and locusts are spoken of as delicious by those who have tried

them." ¶ "Ugh! they may have them."

"But you do not mention the grains, Mr. Westwood."

"No, for I fancy they are least natural, except in the milk."

"But do you not dislike to kill?" said Theodora.

"No, my sympathy with nature does not seem to effect me in that way. I have much real fellow feeling with the creatures but that does not lead me to abhor killing. That king bird, hovering so prettily in air, has killed nine flies and a midge since we began talking, & the thrush has killed for his mate a beautiful caterpillar at this instant. Far up the mountain side— there! do you see him poise on that butternut? — is a red squirrel who will slip into the first unguarded nest he finds and suck the eggs or the brains of the nestlings as he

would a nut." ¶ "I see, Nature sets you a savage example, surely. But is there nothing in nature that moves to mercy and peace and comradeship?"

"Certainly, but within the species as a rule. To your species loyalty, to other species war, is the law of nature for gregarious animals. I belong to the human species and to men I give that sympathy, love & fellowship which my nature urges."

"But does it not make the heart hard to one's fellows to kill anything?"

"No. I never had a hard heart. I do not like to give pain. I like to kill instantly. But I never fought with a man in my life, or wanted to injure one. Nor have I ever seen any evidence to show that hunters or butchers were murderous or cruel toward men. All this talk, too, that diet affects morals is mere superstition. A poor-

ly-nourished man is always irritable, that is all, but cruelty & mercy are matters of education and innate disposition, not of beans or beef."

"True," said Edith, "I know Mrs. Pearson, who lives on hot water and raw beef. She is the gentlest woman I know, a Quaker, & a fanatic on cruelty to animals."

"What is your doctrine of diet?"

"I can hardly be said to have one, except simplicity. Still I have a prejudice against the grains. They make people fat, slow, lazy, old too soon. Some roots are as bad. I use a little bread, but not much and that mainly corn bread. Then wheat fields and potato fields are not as poetic as groves and vineyards and orchards. In the summer I live on milk, curds, eggs, fish, berries, fresh vegetables, melons and tomatoes from my garden. In the winter

and fall and spring I have game, beef, mutton, goat-venison, honey, canned fruits, apples, nuts, milk, eggs and fish as before. There are seasons too of special diet. When strawberries are ripe I live on them almost altogether. The same with huckleberries, raspberries, blackberries, and later grapes, apples, nuts and persimmons. Whatever food nature provides most bountifully I make my chief food at that season. There is a time when I live altogether on green corn.

"You see I want to supply my own wants, mainly, and be self-sufficient, and live simply. I have succeeded better even than Thoreau. He imported rice, sugar, flour, cocoa, salt, rye and Indian meal, molasses, pork, lard, dried apples. None of these things, I, except a little bread or Indian meal at intervals; and besides these

I import butter, some grain for my fowls and cattle, and oil for my lamp. And my exports, you see, are considerable. My surplus milk and eggs, honey, apples, berries, nuts, game, fish, calves, colts, puppies, —why the sale of my puppies alone would more than buy all that I use, except books.

"And then, by daring to live the simple, natural, savage life, I save so many expenses. Thoreau bought shoes, I make my own moccasins or sandals and wear those only on rough journeys or in winter. He bought clothes. I make mine of leather or corduroy, for I can tan as well as an Indian, and can cut and sew as well as any tailor, & in summer, as you see, the labor in that line is not much. I make my own bows and arrows, boomerangs, raw-hide lassoos, sometimes even bone fish hooks. It is delightful and poetic

to live the life of the primative man. My arrows are tipped with real Indian-made flints, picked up here and there in many states, & I have two-hundred odd of them. The bow strings are of sinew. I sleep in skins. You see how simple my agriculture is; my grapes and berries grow wild, my apples need little care, my garden is but small and the work in it a delight. In the winter I raise the water of my pond several feet and that floods many acres where lush grass grows in summer. They come from the Red Farm and help me cut that on shares. Really, the only thing that troubles me is the thought that I am living here in idyllic happiness while hundreds, thousands, yes, millions of my fellows endure miseries I dare not dwell on. I have no more land than an average farmer, and that poor and stony. I do so

little I am almost ashamed when I compare it with the agonized struggle of all about me, and yet I produce more than I want and am actually growing rich on my surplus."

And he stopped and looked at them with an expression of perplexity, wonder and apology on his face almost child-like.

Saxon Ward was sitting with his chin in his hands, staring at him.

"You always make me feel like a fool!" he blurted.

Forrest laughed & rolling over on the ground looked up at the sky.

"I am very different from these others–"

"Different! I should say so. You are the most original man I ever knew, and by George! you are the sanest. The rest of men are a pack of idiots. You have everything in life worth living for—buoy-

ant health, leisure, intimacy with Nature, time to read, to think, to realize your own happiness, to work out your own artistic longings, room to grow and be yourself, creature comforts, & untrammeled liberty– yes the rest of us are all crazy."

"I think it is this way," said Forrest, tickling the stomach of the great black cat, who lay on her back and alternately purred and lazily struck at him, "I am an egoist. I think only of myself, but other people, I think, make the mistake of forgetting themselves."

"How do you mean?"

"Why they no sooner begin to start in life than they begin to think about other things & other people more than themselves. They have what they call 'ambitions.' Clothes like other people, houses like other people, food like other

people, business like other people, opinions like other people, customs, manners, religion, politics all like other people. That's the way the race runs, & every man in the race is trying so hard to catch up with the one before him that he has no time to think of himself, except the head man, and he runs so hard to keep ahead that he has no more time for self-acquaintance than the others, and dies struggling just as hard as the last man in the procession. Not one is contented, or can give any sane reason for his 'ambitions.' Now that is a true picture of civilization. Bah! I would rather be a savage."

"I see."

"But I am not willing to sacrifice myself to things. *I* am more than clothes, houses, money, business, reputation, etiquette, religion, fashion, codes, & institu-

tions. To grow like a tree in the forest, bearing my own leaves & fruit on my own roots, in my own soil, is *my* ambition. Let others do as they will, I ask nothing from them but room to grow."

"I don't see," said Edith, "how you ever came to *think* of such a thing as living this way."

"And I wonder not so much," said Miss Earle, "at the thought as at the courage to live it."

"Was it Thoreau that suggested it?" said Ward.

"No. Strangely, I never read Thoreau till I was nearly a man and all this had taken shape. Thoreau encouraged me, that is all. I was an original, headstrong boy, loving to be alone and to think. When I first learned to read I read a book about Indians,–Catlin's. I decided that the Indian

was wiser than the white man and made him my teacher. I devoured books only to absorb everything that praised nature, and savage, simple, wise living. Theocritus made a great impression on me, and Epicurus, and Marcus Aurelius. The Red Man and the Greek were the influences that shaped my soul. It has always seemed to me that when civilization is questioned by the savage it has but a sorry little to say for itself.

"At any rate I decided it had nothing for me, except books, Art, and a few of its simplest inventions. It did not take much courage, Miss Earle. I decided to be myself when a mere child, and after that everything was easy and inevitable. Had I lived for praise, first, it would have taken courage."

"But come," he said, bounding to his

feet with that sudden, elastic springiness so characteristic, "I will show you Cave Gables."

And hustling his quaint table ware into the brook, leaving dogs, cat and birds to dispose of the crumbs, he led the way to his odd abode.

CHAPTER IV

ORIGINALLY Cave Gables had been a great rock on the mountain. Crashing down in some ancient landslide it had split crucially & now there were four rocks instead of one, lying there on the terrace, close to the steep, ten feet high or so, and rather more feet apart. Forrest had leisurely erected a Gothic roof of peeled chestnut logs, clapboarded with riven shingles, and then covered these with earth and stones, brought down from the steep above, till only the sharp gables emerged from the mound.

A curious building, half art, half nature, part cave, part castle, with goats running & birds nesting on the roof. The greater part of each gable taken up by a glass window above, and a massive door of hewn planks and wooden hinges below.

On each side of the front door, in the soft sandstone, were little caverns scooped, where the great mastiffs lay — "Watch" and "Ward."

Leonine, yellow eyes gleamed kindly at them as they entered and canine tails beat the welcome-tattoo.

Because of the great trees that grew around it was shady and cool within, in spite of the large, uncurtained windows, and the apex of the Gothic roof was dim and dusky. The house, within, was a Roman cross, the long arm to the west, the short ones north, south, and east. Thus,

though there were no partitions, there were really four rooms, each about ten feet wide, or rather more, with rock walls ten feet high. The floor,— the native soil beaten hard and smooth, swept clean, & adorned here and there with skin rugs and curiously woven mats.

"It is Forrest's fancy," explained Saxon Ward to Miss Earle, "that a man's house should correspond to his character. He would have every one be architect, if not the builder, of his home."

"Nature helped me here, design and build it, too," said Westwood. "I have another whim that every thing in my home should be home-made, or at least, hand-made, and so full of associations. I haven't quite succeeded, but pretty near it."

The west room attracted them. On one side it was piled high with cord wood. On

the other was a long closet of wattle or wicker work, a sort of pantry.

"This is my basket & store," laughed Forrest, opening a wicker door in this and showing them the interior. Very strange & primitive it looked— puncheon shelves, barrels made from hollow logs, troughs, wooden bowls, gourds, baskets, nothing modern except glass bottles and fruit cans.

The north room was the "winter room." No window in this gable, and the whole room had an inner and level ceiling of hewn puncheons laid round side down. This left a loft above, to which there was a ladder from the outside or middle of the cross; the entrance to the room draped with deerskin curtains.

At the inner end of the "winter room" was a fireplace built of rocks as large as this strange savage could carry and piled

up not inartistically. Before this a great bear skin rug, & above a puncheon mantel and a moose skull and antlers. The fire-dogs, two slender, sooty, horned devils of hammered iron, their tails running back to hold the logs.

Overhead, suspended from the log ceiling by iron chains, was a rude dragon, also of hammered iron, bearing a lamp in the claws of each front foot.

"A blacksmith, who has art as well as iron in his blood, made me these for birthgifts," Forrest said.

"Look at his bed!" cried Edith.

It was a short, broad canoe of tulip wood, beautifully carved and inlaid with owls, bats, moons, stars & other nocturnal devices, the background stained black. This half filled with dried fern leaves, sweet-fern leaves, bay leaves, pine, cedar

and hemlock needles, and no telling what else woodsy, soft and fragrant. The whole nest completed by beautiful robes of musk-rat, raccoon, mink, and other soft furs, tanned with the hair on, and painted on the inside with Indian pictures, each robe a complete epic of forest life.

The rest of the furniture consisted of two well filled bookcases with puncheon shelves and buckskin curtains; a three-legged little puncheon writing table; a a great basket armchair made of bulrushes; an immense stuffed buffalo head, used as an ottoman; skin rugs; & queer cushions made of skins of raccoons, foxes, etc., heads and tails on, stuffed with wild-fowl feathers.

Theodora noticed that the pens were wild-goose quills, the inkstand a carved horn, & a fossil ammonite the paper-weight.

"When I draw those buckskin curtains, and shut this room off, on cold nights, it's snug enough before a good fire."

"Yes," said Ward, "I was here, once, on a winter night, when the wind howled without. To see Forrest sitting on that buffalo head, dressed like an Indian, the collies, mastiffs & beagles sprawled about, the black cat blinking at the devils in the fire, while the flame-light danced around the room and lit up the carvings and those drawings on the buckskin tapestries, made a savage picture I shall never forget."

There were two Indian pipes, feather-fringed, long-stemmed, crossed on the wall with an Indian pouch.

"Do you smoke?" asked Miss Earle in amazement.

"Yes, and no. I learned to smoke among the Indians to be able to accept the

pipe of peace. The Indian was superior even in his vices. Before the whites came from Eskimo-land to Aztec-land there was not an Indian who knew how to brew an intoxicating drink, or to use it. Tobacco was the only solace, & that was diluted into 'Kin-nee-Kin-nick' and used most temperately. Tobacco-smoking is the least harmful of all the drug-vices & the most poetic and philosophic. When a friend comes who smokes I offer him my pipe of peace, but I never smoke now, myself. Even tobacco is too disturbing. I love an unclouded soul.

That pipe was given me by the New York Indians when they adopted me. The bowl is from the famous Pipestone Quarry in Minnesota. The other bowl is of burned clay. I found it when digging in my garden. Perhaps some other savage raised

corn there before me."

They examined the east room. It had a number of book cases, a massive table of hewn timbers pinned together & several of the woven, bulrush armchairs. On the table Miss Earle noticed the rough draft of a poem, which she obtained permission to read.

A TRUE MAN is a FOREST TREE.

O Liberty, I love thee passing well,
And spurn the sordid thoughts of those who tell
Of values compassed by betraying thee —
Cheap, cheap, too cheap the price at which they sell.

I love the rivers and the open air,
The clouds, the wilderness, and wild things there;

And say a true man is a forest tree,
By Nature planted deep and rooted fair.

I love the wind-floods and the shaken sea,
The great blue sky-tent's clean immensity,
The manly mountain and the pregnant plain;
With these the song-soul breathes in sympathy.

I love the primal, ancient, granite fact,
The mystic meaning moving in the act;—
The old world-currents tiding in my brain
Make seem small loss the gew-gaws I have lacked.

It was noticable in this room, as well as the entrance hall, that the soft sandstone walls were freely chiseled into significant shapes, some weird, some grotesque, some dimly suggestive, as though the rock had naturally & accidentally assumed

familiar shape. ¶ The east room wall suggested a dark or cavernous forest full of mystery—

Tree-trunks, rocks, guarded branches half lost in misty formlessness here and there a human foot, or leg, or hand or half-everted face showing; or the coils of a serpent with hidden head; or vague forms of lurking ferœ.

In the entrance hall the conceptions were heroic and clearly wrought out. On the west side Indians and dogs were in furious combat with a bear, on the east was an imaginary home scene of pre-historic man. Both full of spirit & skillful shaping.

"O my! Look at these eyes!—What is it, a wildcat?" and Edith caught Forrest's arm and pointed into the dark loft.

Forrest laughed and gave a chuck, and Edith screamed and jumped aside as a

great bird floated down, like a ghost to his head, making the cavernous dwelling ring as he suddenly erected himself and, glaring at them with wild eyes, uttered a demoniac *hoo-hoo-hooer-hoo!*

"That is my winged cat, Hoolahoo. I raised him from a baby," said Forrest, stroking the bird, who glared at them suspiciously for a few moments, his eyes gradually closing to mere slits, and then, lifting his wings, flew noiselessly back to the loft.

"At night he comes in & out of yonder hole in the peak, and by day other birds come in & out there too. I have not learned to consider a bird in my house unlucky."

"'Hoolahoo!' an Irish owl!" giggled Edith the irrepressible.

The only other noticeable features of the dwelling were a carpenter bench be-

yond the "Basket and store," and the various ornaments and utensils hung on all the walls — antlers, skulls and heads of wild animals; horns, pouches, lariats, fish rods, fish spears, hunting knives, axes and hatchets, bows & arrows, lances, clubs and canes, guns and pistols, gourds.

Perhaps most curious of all, up in the roof, near the hole, was an immense hornet's nest with the insects busily going in and out.

"I think I remember," said Miss Earle, "reading in 'Walden' of a dream Thoreau had of 'a larger and more populous house' than his, 'standing in a golden age * * * a vast, rude, substantial, primitive hall; * * * a cavernous house wherein you must reach up a torch upon a pole to see the roof.'"

"When I read that I was 'struck all of a heap' for I had built this house first.

It seemed strange that my partly accidental house should so nearly have realized his ideal."

Coming outside Forrest brought his flute.

"Wait here a moment."

Springing up the sides of the irregular exterior of his dwelling he seated himself on a ledge & began playing a weird melody. And as they looked a great snake, shining black, slid out from among the rocks.

Six feet long, the constrictor seemed in ecstasy. His body expanded and contracted with long-drawn breaths, his neck lifted and swayed rhythmically, his tongue darted unceasingly in & out, his eyes were bright yet mild. He drew near to Forrest and swayed before him, then, suddenly, while Edith cried out with terror, twined

around his leg and quickly up to his neck, where he stroked his head about the man's face like an affectionate cat.

Forrest put down the flute, talked gently to the creature, petted him, unwound & laid him gently down, and then came to them.

"O horrid!" said Edith, "why do you make pets of such dreadful creatures!"

Forrest smiled.

"I have a pet toad, too."

"I am disgusted. Why do you not love beautiful things, only?"

"Beauty is a matter of appreciation."

"Do you mean to say that the toad is as beautiful as the humming-bird?"

"It is a matter of appreciation."

"Forrest argues" said Saxon, seeing that his friend had fallen into an abstracted silence, "that everything in nature is

beautiful, that everything in the universe has its charm. It is for us to find the charm and appreciate the beauty, and the volume of the sum total of our pleasure depends upon the thoroughness of our appreciation."

"Well, I declare, you gentlemen make me out narrow, prejudiced and ignorant to your satisfaction," pouted Edith.

"Everything has its charm," smiled Forrest, looking at her.

"Even the screams and pouts of a pretty woman," seconded Saxon.

"There's not much charm in being laughed at."

"Laugh with the laughers and you laugh as long as they."

"And have a double laugh — with and at them."

Edith began to smile at her tormentors.

"But there are normal differences of

beauty and charm in the relation of phenomena to ourselves; while abstractly they may be equal, our history and physiology justify all our likes and dislikes."

"Thank you, Forrest."

"Yet whoso cultivates the overlook sees the most beauty and joy."

"If charms are equal, the city is as good as the forest, the artificial life as the natural — aha! I have you, Sir Savage!"

"Not yet. I repeat, charms are abstractly equal but race history & individual constitution justify our preferences — the city charms, artificiality has joys, luxury delights, vice and crime and all evil have attending pleasures— yet man was wilderness-born and wilderness-reared. The few generations of artificiality have not aborted the instincts inherited through long ages of nature. The happiness and health for

which the city man sighs and struggles are easy as breathing to the natural man."

"Do you distinguish between happiness and pleasure?" asked Miss Earle.

"Certainly. Happiness is *the* pleasure — the joy of healthy existence & healthy action in soul and body."

CHAPTER V

WHAT will you have for dinner?" he suddenly asked.

"O," said Edith, "give us just what you would have had yourself. We want to live just as you do, today."

"Yes," said Theodora, "today we are your disciples."

"But I meant to pick my dinner from the wild strawberry vines."

"Delightful!— so will we."

"Well, we had better commence now. I see by the sun that it is approaching noon, and one takes more time satisfying

hunger, picking food bit by bit in that wild way."

So he led them to places where, among the rich grass, the ruddy fruit grew in profusion. "They are ripe before the grass this year," he said.

"Do you remember," he asked, "that Thoreau relates that when he was so anarchistic as to refuse to pay his poll tax, and they imprisoned him, he was released in time to pick his dinner of huckleberries on Fair Haven Hill?"

"Yes, I remember; it is in 'Walden.'"

"Do you pay a poll tax, Mr. Westwood?"

"O yes, I pay taxes, of course. I believe in these things no more than Emerson or Thoreau, but resistance to them is folly, except on the mental plane. Some day the world will understand that

to take any man's property without his consent is robbery, & then taxes will cease."

"But what will support social institutions?"

"Free contributions will support whatever institutions the people desire, just as churches are supported now in these States."

He made them dainty cups of leaves, sewn together with their own stems.

"Take these and put berries in them, eating as you work, & when we each have a cup full we will go to our table and sit in the shade and eat them."

When their cups were full they did so, and he brought them fresh cream and maple sugar and carven spoons, and they feasted divinely. And he gave each a chaplet of vine leaves & an owl plume, and said laughingly: "Now you are my disciples."

"This grove is like a temple," said Saxon.

"Yes, I think all architecture was suggested by nature and imitates it."

"Mr. Westwood, why *don't* you go to church?"

He put on a comical look.

"Do you really think, if I went to church next Sunday, 'just as I am, without one plea,' that I would be welcome?"

Edith laughed, as her fancy conjured up the vision of this naked pagan sitting in a stuffy tabernacle among the scented ladies and starched deacons of the scandalized congregation.

"I really don't think the church has anything for me, Miss Lyle."

"'The friendly & flowing savage, who is he? Is he waiting for civilization, or is he past it, and mastering it?'" quoted Saxon.

"Mr. Westwood," said Theodora, with her grave thoughtful tones, "would you mind telling us what you think of religious things; your views are different from those of most, I fancy?"

He leaned back against the shagbark and looked up among the leaves, while the black cat rubbed, purring, against him.

"Yes, so different that I hardly know how to tell them. No one ever asked me before."

"As a youth I rejected all creeds, revelations, gods. I was atheist, or, better, agnostic, for I said I did not know. But neither did I believe. But gradually a strange feeling of kinship between myself and nature grew in me. I gave myself up more and more to these strange invisible currents of life, as the sea obeys the moon and the sap the seasons. The feeling which

I had always had that in the trees & rocks was life, a life similar to my own except in degree, intensified, until suddenly the whole thing crystallized, as it were, and I saw that the whole universe was One Great Life."

"Pantheism," said Saxon.

"Perhaps you may call it that. But I am not sure it is like other people's pantheism. To me the universe is a living organism, living, breathing, intelligent throughout, if you do not define these terms too rigidly. I feel that in the whole infinite universe there is but one life, one force, one element, one substance, *one existence*, *one fact* — One. It seems to me that all these apparent forces, substances, elements, are infinitely interchangeable & elusive and at bottom the same."

"But what puzzles me in pantheism is

to know where *I* come in," said Saxon.

"Yes, I understand. I would have been a pantheist years before had I not felt that to hold the doctrine was to lose my own identity. But suddenly I saw it differently. If there is in all the universe but One, *then I am that One;* not in the sense of completeness, of course, but in the sense of continuity & identity of spirit and substance and nature. This is the hardest part to explain to you; indeed I do not know that I can make you see it as I see it." He paused a moment & then pointed to the brook. "You see that the water divides there and flows on each side of a great rock. Now, if we imagine the brook endowed with consciousness, no doubt the stream on the right of the rock will feel itself separate from the stream on the left, but to us they are plainly con-

tinuous and the same. So I suppose every life in the world flows from the same infinite source and finally returns to it and while feeling itself separate, because limited and partial, is really continuous and the same."

"O I understand you!" cried Theodora, "I see it all. What an infinite dignity & largeness it seems to give one's life! It awes me."

"Yes," said Forrest, with a grateful look at her, "and you feel that more and more as you consider it. You realize that not only are you continuous with the divine cause, but with the whole universe in its every part and motion. Every man that you see is yourself under another form, every animal also, and not only that, but every rock & tree, the streams, the fields, the skies. You are everywhere and every-

thing. The sense of identity, individuality and personality which you possess you now see is really a dim and partial apprehension of your Divine Personality and immortality. You have lived forever and shall live forever, for you are the One Only and Self-existent. You may die millions of times, as regards change of form, and still you have eternal & indestructible life. You are able to give yourself up unrestrainedly to the enjoyment of the passing panorama of life, because it is the panorama of your own eternal evolution. You are at peace with God, because you are God, you are at peace with the universe because you are the universe, you are at peace with men because you are mankind. You begin to understand the divine serenity of Emerson, the child-like ease and sufficiency of Thoreau, the infinite

comradeship of Whitman. These men all felt more or less clearly their continuity with the universe. As you grow into the thought, everything enlarges. This life is but a days journey, there are millions more before you; death is but a sleep, a change of form, and no matter how long you sleep, or what you dream, you shall wake and know yourself at last. You have all the time there is to grow in, all the universe to enjoy yourself in, and you shall see all things and have all experience."

"It is very great," said Saxon, "but I do not understand, if we are continuous with God and of the same substance, how it is that we can be so weak and wicked, and full of mistakes and trouble."

"It is a problem that seems to me fully answered by my theory," said Forrest, "God is complete, he is everything; being

complete, he is perfect, for only completeness can be perfect. But we, so far as we are members and parts of God are incomplete, imperfect, for the partial cannot be perfect. And imperfection explains it all — our strength is imperfect therefore we are weak; our goodness is imperfect therefore we are wicked; our wisdom is incomplete therefore we are full of mistakes. And where there are weakness, sin, mistakes, there must surely be regret and trouble. But we can not reproach the Perfect for our imperfections, because to give us any separate life at all he had to give us the life we have with all its consequences; he could not, mighty as he is, make the partial at the same time whole, and the imperfect at the same time perfect, and so all the rest follows. And from this I deduce that the futher we are from the divine, the center,

the source, the more imperfect, the weaker, the more ugly, foolish, wrong we are and that, on the other hand, every step of approach toward the divine makes us stronger, wiser, more sane, healthy, happy; better balanced, completer. This explains the instant satisfaction & growing reward which comes to every man who aspires to a higher life, who covets wisdom, who pursues beauty, who idealizes and worships his ideals; it explains the inevitable delight of charity, generosity, liberality, comradeship, for all these things unite us & draw toward the source."

He stopped and seemed lost in thought and they looked at him in wonder, almost in reverence.

"It explains and justifies all religions," he went on, dreamily, "everything and every thought has sometime & somewhere

been worshipped. And rightly, for everything and every thought is divine. The divine is in everything, serpent, tree, or stone, and everything is a symbol of divine things, and every book is a Bible & every thought a revelation, and every man a Messiah."

"Ugh!" said Edith, with comical horror, "Suppose my Methodist minister heard of such things. Justifying idolatry! I ought not to listen to such words."

"It is grand, sublime!" said Theodora with a flash of her dark eyes. "The noblest gospel that ever I heard, and the only one that ever gave my sceptical, pessimistic nature the least feeling of security & peace. There is *room* in this. It is a religion for grown-up folks."

Forrest smiled at her enthusiasm and stroked the black cat sleeping between his

knees.¶ "It makes one very contented and happy. There is charm, beauty, divinity in everything, however lonely or ugly. On one side, at least, each thing lays hold on everything & extends to infinity and there is no real separation. We are like the sea 'in the hollow of his hand' and cannot fall out."

"There are infinite possibilities in the doctrine, I can see," said Saxon. "It is certainly the largest and broadest of creeds and appears to offer a key to innumerable problems."

"Wait," said Forrest, and dumping the astonished cat on the grass, who stretched herself and yawned reproachfully, he darted into his castle.

"His religion reminds me" said Edith, "of that cannibal sailor of the Nancy Bell, in Gilberts' poem, that 'elderly naval man'

who sat on a stone and sang 'in a singular minor key:'

'O I'm the cook, and the captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig;
And the bos'un tight,
And the midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.'"

They all laughed, but Miss Earle was inclined to look a little indignant at the flippant comparison.

"Don't be mad, Theo, I'm not quite so shallow as I seem, and I really think I shall always feel a little better for what Forrest said today."

Forrest came back with a paper in his hand.

"Here is a poem I wrote on these ideas."

"One moment," said Saxon, putting up his hand, "how does this belief of yours

bear on future life, transmigration, etc.?"

"I am not very clear, there. Perhaps the spirit retains its cohesion for a time after death and leads an unbodied spirit life; but sooner or later, I suppose, it breaks up and disperses or goes into some other form. To a certain extent the doctrines of the spiritists & transmigrationists may both be true. Matter continually changes its form; so, I think, does spirit. Matter I suppose is only visible spirit and spirit only invisible matter, & each merely a form or expression of the one, divine force which, in the last analysis, is the only thing. I suppose no knowledge to be lost. Every form I think keeps a perfect record of its changes. In our crude way we read them in the teeth of a horse, the horns of a cow, the rings of a tree, the strata of a world. If we knew enough we should find

the record exact and unbroken — nothing omitted. When at last after every minor change, we enlarge into conscious Divine Identity we shall know, remember and foreknow everything – nothing lost, nothing imperfect, nothing to regret, nothing to antagonize — only infinite serenity, strength, health, knowledge and peace."

"That makes Nirvana look very different from annihilation."

"Here is my poem:"

IDENTITY.

O little cloud, aloft in blue,
Of the same cloth cut, am I, as you?
And do I, like you, some day fly
Along the azure-tinted sky?
Am I the blue, the mist, the rain,
The clod that drinks it on the plain;
The little flower with lifted lips,

The bee that out its nectar sips?

With the falling star am I undone?
Do I burn in glory in the sun?
Is there but One? Are all things mine?
Am I a worm? Am I divine?
Have I ever lived; do I ever die
And yet exist eternally?
Again, again, and yet again
Transmutation, loss yet gain.

Sometimes seeing, sometimes sleep,
The backward wave, the forward sweep,
The ebb, the sin, the diastole,
The bloom, the genius, the thunder-roll;
Contradiction agreeing sure,
The trap self-caught with its own lure,
The circle returning whence it came,
Ever unbroken the spheric frame.

* * *

O little bird, in the upward tree,
Surely I know your minstrelsy!
O lightning-pen on the midnight sky,
I read at last your word on high.

"Tell me the secret of happiness?"

"Feel your identity and agreement with the universe and appreciate the joy of the moment."

CHAPTER VI

HE led them now toward the lake, walking himself in the brook, which splashed about his bare legs, while they clambered along the banks. Part way they came to a clump of stately trees, from a branch of one depending a loop of wild-grape vine a distance of 50 or 60 feet.

"This is one of my play grounds," said Forrest, "and here is my swing."

Catching the loop of vine he ran up the slope with it, and then, springing up with his foot in the loop, he shot out a hundred feet or more & back again, while

the great limb swayed and sprang above. A beautiful scene, full of wild, child-like abandon.

"What a magnificent animal!" whispered Saxon.

"More than that," murmured Miss Earle, "a wise, free soul."

"He certainly holds something that we lack."

When they came to the lake he could persuade none of them to enter his little birch canoe: they feared an upset, so he led them to where a great, sprawling willow thrust a number of big limbs out horizontally over the water.

"This tree was blown down once, over the lake, and then some of the branches became upward trunks."

They seated themselves on this romantic natural pier, sitting on trunks, leaning

against limbs; Forrest sitting on one close to the water, letting his feet plash.

The water was deep, yet clear, & they could see sunfish, bass, pickerel, and sometimes a turtle below. As Edith leaned over to look at them she suddenly cried out:

"O there goes my ring!"

Forrest marked the spot from which the ripples dilated, and then, without a word, tossing his wampum belt & pouch ashore, he dropped forward from his perch like a great turtle and slid down through the clear water in pursuit of the jewel.

He looked like an immense frog, down there, paddling about. Almost immediately he rose with the circlet in his grasp, presenting it to Edith who thanked him profusely, and then rested himself unconcernedly on a sunny branch with his feet in the water again. Wearing only what swimmers call a

"trunk," anyway, he was quite amphibious.

"I will show you some fun," he said, and putting his hand to his mouth he "yodeled" like a Switzer.

Instantly loud barks rang thro' the Vale, and in a moment the mastiffs, the beagles, the collies, came rushing toward them.

"Here come the henchmen!" said Sax.

"Into the water, children!" cried Forrest, clapping his hands.

No second invitation, that warm day, was needed. With joyous clamour the dogs dashed pell-mell into the cool fluid; splashing it high, swimming, chasing each other, lapping with greedy tongues; while the spectators applauded.

Forrest could not resist the contagion, but leapt from his branch and joined with

them, sometimes in the canoe, sometimes swimming, sometimes playing "tag" on the bank.

They were wild with delight to have him with them, and tore around, barking frantically, their eyes shining with joy.

Suddenly he stopped and waved his hand.

"Watch, Ward, home again!"

Very promptly, but with wistful backward glances they departed.

"To your work again, boys!" he said to the collies, & they, too, with suddenly sobered countenances, returned to their duties.

"How did you get your bark canoe?" said Miss Earle.

"I bought it of an Indian in the Adirondacs, and a great time I had getting it here. I paddled it whenever I could,

lifted it on my head over "carrys," and the rest of the way Blackbird dragged it on a "travois." She was disgusted with the job, and had a great notion to kick it into smithereens, but thought better of it on my account.

"Woman-like," said Saxon.

"Ah, yes, Blackbird is a very lady."

He was lying now in the sun, on a flat rock, near the water, drying himself, and looked very Greek-like with the damp locks slightly curling on his brow and his naked limbs glistening in the bright light; all reflected in the water.

"Tell us about your trips to the Adirondacs."

"O do you care to know! Well, quite often in the summer, when the hay making is over, (I love that & never miss it) I leave my place to the care of the people

of the Red Farm, take my rifle, my bow and arrows, my flute, my mastiffs and beagles, a buffalo robe & two blankets, and hie away to the mountains. The journey to and fro is pleasant, for the people on the way all know me and call me the "White Indian." I am a circus to the farmers, and they are glad to have me stop a night. They feed Blackbird royally, and the dogs, to see them perform, and my bow-shooting, lasso-throwing, and flute playing, always make me a free-comrade. In the mountains I camp till cold weather, and then come home laden with pelts and happy memories of the great woods. I have friends all through there — guides, Indians, half-breeds, campers; but I am alone, preferably. A man in the presence of Nature should be on his best behavior, but these people feel nothing, see

nothing and chatter nonsense, mostly."

"Read us another poem," coaxed Edith, "something about the woods."

He went gravely to his pouch, and pulling out a MS. read them this:

SWAMP HAPPINESS.

I

Were I a betrachian cool,
Sitting beside some pool,
In an alder-stump cave in the bank;
With a fern before
And moss on the floor,
And my walls dew-droppy and dank;
A bulrush bed,
A toad stool,
Fishes to see
For company;
And a turtle agog
On a log

With a Chinaman's neck to his head;
A newt on the stair,
In a lily-pad chair;
And a drift-wood boat,
On which I could float,
With a devil-fly perched at the helm;
Water to whelm;
And a very deep voice in my throat—
Tell me,
Would not that be happiness?

II

Were I a sinuous snake
Under a bush in a brake;
With a pitch-forky tongue,
Bifurcate,
And elate;
With a toad in my maw
Still wriggling and raw;
A red flower by my side;
A spider net overswung,

Jeweled with dew;
Shady water before
Wherein I could glide;
Arrow-leaves by the shore;
Hot sun overhead;
A little green heron— Pee-quawk!
Black birds to whistle and talk,
And one with a shoulder of red
Perched in a white-birch tree,
List'ning a Pewee-bird sing
Of a yellow-jack bee and his sting:—
Sting me–e–e! Sting me–e–e!—
Would not that be happiness?

III

Were I a sun perch in the pond,
Armored in rainbow and red;
Eyes rolling hither and yon;
Droop-cornered mouth to my head;
A telescope yawn;
Daggers all over my back,

Bristling when I would attack
Cannibals after my spawn;
Driving them out and beyond
My clean-swept, gravelly nest
In the sand;
(Shoal water next to the land,
Clear amber water and warm.)
Gold-fin fanning at rest,
Under the Nymphea shade;
Or charging with passionate spite,
Jealous of raid;
Dreaming of babies a-swarm
Before me in fluent crowd,
Darting, fine-shredded cloud —
If I were that Amazon Knight
Would not that be happiness?

IV

Were I a musquash in the swamp,
Loving a swim and a romp
Beneath the moon;

When the waters are bright and still,
And the bare, dead tree on the hill
Gleams white;
And the bark of the coon,
Or the laugh of the loon
Wakes the night;
The owl neighs "Ah-y-y-hey-hey-hoo!"
And the night hawk booms "Bhoo-oo!"
And the little mouse cowers in fright,
With a wigwam of mud,
Rising out of the flood;
Bedded warm and soft
In the dome-shaped loft;
With bank-caves, beside,
To dive to and hide;
Under cover so nice
When winter brings ice —
What think you,
Would not that be happines?

V

Or were I the man by that swamp,
On the hill above, in the camp,
Noting the play go on:—
The iris-fish and her spawn;
The frog in his swimming school;
The snake asleep in the sun;
The black-bird's gurgle of fun;
The turtle's drop from the stump,
Sss–plump!
In the pool;
The muskrat's dive;
The paper hive
Of the bees;
And at night
The camp fire's light
On the trees;
The sounds that wake
The forest still,
Whistle and cluck of whippoorwill,

The screech owl's quavering shake,
Faint heard plash from the lake —
Ah! — that indeed would be happiness!

"Come and see the Swallow's Nest before the afternoon is too far spent."

They went back thro' the trees and up by Cave Gables again. Back of it a goat path went up the precipitous hill-side. Forrest aided Miss Earle, and it gave her artistic nature a strange thrill to be so close to this nude, supple savage & feel his firm grasp on her arm.

She felt a desire she did not indulge to put out her hand on his back and feel the sinewy play of his shoulders.

Swallow's Nest was just at the hilltop. One jutting rock formed the floor, and another, some eight feet over, a sort of pent-house roof. On three sides open to the

view; at the back, rock. Rocks piled up formed a rude battlement about the edge, and a bitter-sweet & a wild clematis fringed along the eaves. Under the roof a number of eave-swallows had nests, flying in and out twittering. There were a little table, a bench, & a hammock from which whoever swung could see the whole view.

The outlook was superb, over hills, dales and plain.

"O what a lovely balcony!" cried Edith, "and what a view! I could stay here forever."

"Is it here you write your poems?" asked Miss Earle.

He looked at her with a little of his former shyness, and yet seemed pleased.

"Yes, I write a good many here in summer time. I read and study here, too. I like to be here in a thunder storm and

watch it pass over the country, and the big drops fringe down along the rock-eaves."

"These little swallows do not fear you?"

"O no. We are old comrades. They are shy now, for you are here, but often perch on me, or the table, when I am alone, and share a lunch with me."

Edith had climbed into the hammock, and he gently swung it as he stood, while the others sat by the table. They were all happy and at ease.

Miss Earle leaned forward, with her elbows on the table, & fixed her dark eyes on Forrest.

"Would you advise all people to drop their present habits and live as you do, Mr. Westwood?"

"O no; the garment should fit the form. What I would advise is that every man should live his *own* life, questioning him-

self closely, however, whether greater simplicity would not bring more happiness. Be yourself, be free, is my advice, and I believe simplicity promises more than luxury."

"Then you do not condemn luxury?"

"Not at all, if it is cheap enough."

"Could you reform society on your ideal, what would it be like?"

He showed his teeth in a smile and then looked thoughtfully out over the landscape.

"A Federation of the Free."

"O Mr. Westwood," burst out Edith, "don't talk like that. Tell us in detail just what it would be like."

He laughed now, and patted her head as one might an impulsive child.

"I have no very clear idea. I have been living my own life, not planning for

others. Still I have dreamed sometimes that the world was changed, that laws, governments, institutions were about worked out, and all nations one. In my dream the people seemed to be gathered together over the world in hamlets and village-groups, drawn more by similarity of taste and feeling than by necessity. Not exactly or totally communistic, but co-operating in so many ways as in some things to approach that. The land possessed only by those who used it and while using it.

"In my dream everybody took a share in the necessary work, & thus a few hours apiece was enough each day, and all were employed and all compensated. The rest of the time, everybody took pleasure, read, studied, did artistic work, what they pleased. And these artistic products, being fruits of love, were not sold but

given to friends, or freely to the public. The artist working in his moments of leisure to express his sense of beauty, asking no reward but his own satisfaction and the praise of sympathetic observers. And I seemed to see all habits, customs, behavior, much freer and simpler than now. No social law except that of non-interference; no fashions, no restraints, no inquisitions in morals or religion, individual tastes followed everywhere, and every human flower after its own kind."

Edith clapped her hands, but Miss Earle kept her dark eyes gravely on his face. She was deeply interested, and seemed like a person absorbed in the approaching discovery of some long sought solution.

"I thank you, Mr. Westwood. I believe there is more in that dream of yours than you are aware of."

He gave her a swift, strong glance and each seemed to look into the other's heart.

They went down, after a while, and had a little supper on the terrace; and then they talked of books and nature and sang songs & listened to his flute till dark came and the moon rose.

He brought their horses, then, and walked with them to the confines of his little domain. The black cat ran with him and the great owl swooped down from somewhere and perched on his head. And as the bird swayed on its unsteady perch turning its pivoted head to stare at them at whiles, and flapping its great wings, they thought of Odin.

And the moonlight drifted whitely down through the trees on all.

After they had left him, & could only hear his flute ringing sweetly through the

silent woods, Miss Earle, riding between her two companions, said:

"Do you know, that man has taught me the greatest truth of my life? I have been profoundly dissatisfied with my own life and that of the world, as you know. Now I am coming up here on this mountain side, shall purchase land next this philosopher, and, gradually gathering around me like-minded spirits, we will form a nucleus of that freer society of which he has dreamed. What do you say, dear friends, will you help me?"

"We will."

And in the distance, sweet & far, rang the flute.

CHAPTER VII

IT was morning again in Vale Sunrise, the dew on the flowers and leaves, the level light streaming through the trees.

A beautiful tall girl walked in the path near Cave Gables. Her gown was of the simplest, and short enough to show her beautifully turned bare feet and ankles. From her uncovered head her fair hair fell in two thick braids far below her waist. Her great gray eyes were pensive and dreamy.

She sat down on a log and seemed lost in thought. Suddenly there was a glad bark, a beagle fawned upon her, and she looked

up to see Forrest close at hand, with the milk crock balanced on his head.

"O Forrest!" she said, a glad light breaking thro' her clear, brown complexion and making her somewhat irregular features beautiful.

He set down the crock & putting his arms around her, kissed her tenderly.

"What brings you here, my sweet Light of the Morning?"

She smiled happily at his loving words and patted his brawny arm, in a sort of proud timidity, with her shapely hand.

"They were so busy at the Red Farm, this morning, they could spare nobody to come for the milk. I said I would come, but mother grumbled and said I saw too much of you now. Father winked at me, behind her back, & said he wished I would go, as it would be a great favor to him."

"Your mother does not like me, altogether?"

"No. It was all right till I took to wearing simple frocks, going barefoot, wearing my hair down in braids, and reading Emerson instead of the fashion paper. Then it was 'O Mabel, why don't you be more ladylike!' from morning till night. But after all I have my will, & father says he likes me better this way."

Forrest laughed. "Lucky for you that you are a spoiled child!"

He blew his long whistle, there was a neigh, and soon came Blackbird, galloping. She ran sniffing to Mabel, who gave her a ginger cake from her pocket. Forrest picked the girl up in his strong arms and lifted her like a bundle to the mare's back.

"O but I came to carry the milk," she protested.

"You do look like a picture with the crock on your head," he replied, "but this morning you shall ride and I will carry," and he lifted the crock again and walked beside her.

"O Forrest you are so good & handsome, and I am so happy!"

And a thrush near them sang till the woods trembled with the music, and the waters of the brook tinkled over the stones.

CHAPTER VIII

SOME years are dead, and it is Vale Sunrise again. The northern end of the Vale, where Cave Gables is, remains unchanged, but south of the lake, and beyond, is a strange sylvan village. In this hamlet live our old friends, Theodora Earle, Edith Lyle, "Mabel of the Morning Light," as Forrest calls her, Saxon Ward, and many we have never known. Each has his or her own little home, for a separate habitation for each individual is one of the tenets of this ideal community. They call themselves Simplicists, and the home of

each is supposed to represent that person's character and be sacred to his whims and ideals. Mabel's father has joined the community, & his farm is now divided among as many of the community as wish farm work. The artistic blacksmith, who made the fire-devils for Forrest's ingle, has his smithy on the edge of the village. Saxon keeps his printing office in Rippleford, but lives in Vale Sunrise, and edits a paper for the community. As much as possible the people employ each other, and so have a self-supporting community. Some of the members are artists, one is a sculptor, several are journalists or authors. A noted singer and two noted musicians call this "home." These artistic and literary folk sell their products and talents to the outside world, but among themselves these things are favors & not a matter of dollars.

The community has a carpenter, a mason, a tailor, a dress-maker, a baker, a cook who cooks for all, a laundry that washes for all, some housekeepers who go around and do the housework for all. There is a public library, reading rooms, a museum, an art gallery, a social parlor, a hall for meetings, lectures, dramas, etc. All dress as they like, live as they like, do as they like. Everything is free but the repression of freedom. There are no codes, no laws, no rigid customs, no officers. In a mental sense Forrest may be regarded as their leader, and Miss Earle in a business sense, but nobody is bound to stay, acquiesce or obey, but by his own sense of benefit. They co-operate in buying and selling, & in caring for the sick and helpless, and in insuring each other's property.

Very happy these people seem to be,

secure in each others comradeship and sympathy, free to think, speak, act as they will; working short hours, and spending the rest of their time in pursuit of beauty, wisdom and innocent joy. Wealth is despised, and those contented with the least regarded with envy. Thoreau's Walden is a text book, Chloe and Daphnis models, life an acted pastoral.

In their homes & dress the individual peculiarities come out with most picturesque emphasis. Mabel lives in a little English cottage of rough stone, with latticed windows & thatched roof, and dresses like a shepherdess. Miss Earle affects Greek draperies, & resides in a grotto-like studio with a glass roof from which all the light comes. There is an immense aquarium in the centre of the room, and an immense Wardian case in the wall; the other walls

are frescoed in sylvan scenes or hung with pictures; moss-colored carpets cover the floor; statues stand around. Edith Lyle lives in a tiny Swiss *chalet* and dresses in bloomers. Saxon has an American log cabin. The blacksmith lives in a house of iron, full of artistic iron work of his own design and making, and dresses like a fifteenth century artisan. A naturalist finds simplicity in dwelling in a tent all the year around, and dressing in green in summer, white in winter. An author declares the Japanese the ideal Simplicists, and builds his home on their lines. Another author declares simplicity is to be found in avoiding all unnecessary work & in the utmost frugality. He lives in a one-roomed box house of boards, painted all plain red inside and out, one window, no chimney, a kerosene stove, no carpet, a bed of blank-

ets on the floor, hung up by day. He lives on uncooked fruits and nuts only. His furniture consists of a few pine boxes of different sizes, holding his effects. He sits on one, eats from the top of another. Three baskets, a pitcher and glass, a nut-cracker, nut-pick and knife furnish his table. Beyond that only a desk, book shelves and books. He dresses in canvas and lives mostly in the out-of-doors. Another lives in a tower, on a hill, with a glass room at top.

It is an odd world, but a happy one.

Is it a freak, or a sign of the future?

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